

Readout — National Caucus call re the Blockades

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Good evening everyone,

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There was a National Caucus call on the Blockades tonight. I was on the call, please see below a readout and questions raised by MPs:

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Introductory remarks – Minister Alghabra

- ~ We want to update you on the work that our government has been doing on the various blockades. Apologize I'm at the airport, my Policy advisor Miles Hills will take the lead on questions after my remarks.
- ~ The situation is a serious concern to our government, we have meetings and briefings daily on the situation. From an economic standpoint, Ambassador Bridge is a massive concern;
 - o~ 400 millions in goods usually cross the Ambassador Bridge every day;
 - o~ 4000 trucks cross this bridge daily;
 - o~ 20% of the trade with the US goes on that bridge;
 - o~ Massive concerns on job (automakers workers have been cut) and ability to project a secure investment environment for Ontario;
- ~ I spoke with Ontario minister Mulroney yesterday to let her know that we're here to assist. She has promised to look onto it;
- ~ Blockades occur on municipal lands, not on the bridge itself = Under Windsor police's jurisdiction;
- ~ I spoke with Secretary Pete Buttigieg, US offered assistance;
- ~ Had meetings with automotive, food and automobile sector;
- ~ Shout out to Irek Kusmierczyk for all his work and resilience;

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Introductory remarks – Minister Mendicino

- ~ Thanks for joining, especially those from Windsor region. Challenging times.
- ~ Situation in Ottawa:
 - o~ We offered reinforcement from RCMP to help OPP to uphold the law;
 - o~ We start to see some progress: criminal investigations commenced, some people are currently before courts, actions to cut off fuel;
 - o~ However, we start to see some additional volumes of truckers coming back;
 - §~ I announced a second installation of officers at the request of the city;
- ~ Ambassador Bridge situation has a devastating impact on economy.
 - o~ Windsor police requested help from RCMP;
 - o~ We'll send them too to reinforce action;
 - o~ We hope to see some progress very very soon;
- ~ Reinforcement sent to Coutts as well.
- ~ We are closely monitoring the situation in Emerson too.

- o\~ RCMP are moving to take action there very quickly.
- o\~ We'll be staying in close touch with local and municipal partners.

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Introductory remarks from Minister Blair

- \~ We hear a lot about issues around jurisdictions, gives the impression that there's tensions between jurisdictions.
 - o\~ In fact, there have been good communication between OPP and RCMP, great collaboration.
- \~ Later today, the Ontario Attorney General brought an application in the Superior Court of Justice to prohibit blockades organizers to receive donations through Christian crowdfunding GiveSendGo.
- \~ Our officials are also in touch with the White House and the Governor of Michigan.

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Question period:

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Personal Info.

- \~ I would like to hear your comments on:
 - o\~ Story that came out today about the Government of Ontario that missed a meeting regarding the standoff in Ottawa.
 - §\~ **Mendicino:**
Minister Jones was indeed not at the tripartite meeting.
However we have been staying in communication outside that meeting.
Ideally we would have 3 of us all together, but I can confirm the OPP is reinforcing the law.
 - o\~ Reports that are coming out on large American contributions and the fact that the Attorney general of Texas is pushing to make sure that texans donations count despite GoFundMe suspension of the funds.
 - §\~ **Mendicino:**
I know we all have this question in mind.
GoFundMe suspended the funds and did the right thing.
Reflexion on all of us to think about measures to avoid this situation in the future.

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- \~ I believe that we continue to rely too much on other levels of government, we should act more quickly and decisively
- \~ I would like to hear your comments on:
 - o\~ CBC article that came out to say that key leaders are a former RCMP officer who was on the PM's security detail, a top counter-terrorism expert and an ex military officer.
 - o\~ Are we looking at the *Emergencies Act*? — We are losing the respect of USA. Impact on current and future trades. We are also losing respect of Canadians. For example: New Zealand, after 3 days of protests, are shutting them down.
 - §\~ **Mendicino:**
If there's any evidence, we have an extremely solid national security apparatus and we'll respond accordingly.
We have to be respectful of boundaries, politicians cannot take control of that personally.

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- \~ I would like to hear your comments on:
Organizers have instructed to go to elementary schools, 2 schools incidents so far of protestors yelling at elementary school students.
 - o\~ **Mendicino:**
We'll share that with our colleagues of the law enforcement.
- \~ News article yesterday reporting that we are allowing them to use federal lands and parking lots. Did we give the permission on this?
 - o\~ **Mendicino:**
There's some progress to get rid of fixtures and structures.
RCMP is working closely with the OPS to help to take concrete actions.
We understand this has been stressful for constituents but also employees that work there in the last few days.

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Personal Info.

- \~ Who has eyes on Lacolle? This group has been very successful in radicalizing new Canadians. Who is sharing Intel?
- \~ I don't share your optimism on this.
 - o\~ There's 50 trucks parked in front of Wellington, they try to charm the population and get their sympathy.

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Personal Info.

- \~ I have my condo on **Personal**, very confused when I hear about the ongoing 'reinforcement'.
- \~ Preoccupations about sedition. Why organizers haven't been charged for sedition yet?
 - o\~ **Mendicino:**
The decision to lay charges or not is under police and the Public Independent Prosecution Service (PPSC).
- \~ How to find the source of the money if they use cryptocurrency?
- \~ US border: Any possibility that license numbers could be taken down so they couldn't cross the border?
- \~ Time is coming, we will have to confront this. It has to come to an end.

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- \~ Echoing what **Perso** was mentioning on the use of federal lands. I have confirmations that we have indeed allowed them to use those parking lots to park trucks.
 - o\~ Reason: to reduce the congestion.
 - o\~ It's one thing to let them park, it's other to turn a blind eye. These guys are smart, they know what they're doing.
- \~ No information to local members, got latest updates from Twitter, disappointing.
 - o\~ **Mendicino:**
We'll stay in touch. You can reach to Omar, Bill and my team.
 - o\~ **Blair:**
I share your frustrations, but at the same time the police have adopted a solid strategy of negotiation and use force as a last resort. We cannot direct police officers.

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-End-

Meilleures salutations / Best regards,

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Gabriel Bourget

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